

N. Carolina Klan Splits Over Funds

By Howard Covington

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CHARLOTTE, N.C., Sept. 9—Ku Klux Klan leaders representing about half of North Carolina's 1,500 Klansmen have broken with their parent, the United Klans of America, Inc.

They say they will dramatize their split with the UKA, the largest Klan group in the United States, at a "card-burning, charter-burning and cross-burning ceremony" next Monday night.

The issue behind the split is local anger over national control of Klan power and money.

Similar disputes reportedly have split Klan groups in Virginia, Maryland, Indiana and Mississippi since Imperial Wizard (national president) Robert Shelton of Tuscaloosa, Ala., received a one-year Federal sentence for contempt of Congress.

But the breakoff of North Carolina leaders, including the man who took over for Grand Dragon (state president) J. Robert Jones when he joined Shelton in jail, strikes at the heart of the UKA, for the North Carolina "realm has been the UKA's biggest and richest organization.

The break is being led by Joe Bryant of Charlotte, N.C., acting Grand Dragon, who is loyal to Jones but sharply at odds with Melvin Sexton, who was named UKA executive administrator by Shelton before he left for his prison term.

Bryant's "card-burning" ceremony will be held near the textile mill town of Concord, about 20 miles from Charlotte. He said an imperial officer, two members of the North Carolina state Klan board, three of his nine province leaders and at least 10 unit chiefs will join his protest.

Bryant claims that Sexton is using the office to fill his own bank account at the same time he takes "dictatorial" control of the UKA.